United Nations A/C.2/61/L.30

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
2 November 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Second Committee
Agenda item 53 (b)
Sustainable development: follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

South Africa:* draft resolution

Recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the principles and commitments enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[1] the principles embodied in the Declaration of Barbados,[2] the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[3] the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[4] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[5] as well as other relevant declarations and international instruments,

Taking into account all other relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolutions 54/225 of 22 December 1999, 55/203 of 20 December 2000, 57/261 of 20 December 2002 and 59/230 of 22 December 2004,

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), resolution 1, annex I.

[2] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

06-59885 (E) 031106

Taking into account also the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, in particular paragraph 31,[6]

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[7]

Recalling the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, signed at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 24 March 1983,[8] and its Protocols, which contains the definition of the wider Caribbean region of which the Caribbean Sea is part, and which, inter alia, recognizes the special hydrographic and ecological characteristics of the region and its vulnerability to pollution,

Emphasizing the importance of national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector as recognized by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in chapter 17 of Agenda 21,[9]

Considering that the Caribbean Sea area includes a large number of States, countries and territories, most of which are developing countries and small island developing States that are ecologically fragile, structurally weak and economically vulnerable and are also affected, inter alia, by their limited capacity, narrow resource base, need for financial resources, high levels of poverty and the resulting social problems and the challenges and opportunities of globalization and trade liberalization,

Recognizing that the Caribbean Sea has a unique biodiversity and highly fragile ecosystem,

Emphasizing that the Caribbean countries have a high degree of vulnerability occasioned by climate change, climate variability and associated phenomena, such as the rise in sea level, the El Niño phenomenon and the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods and droughts, and that they are also subject to natural disasters, such as those caused by volcanoes, tsunamis and earthquakes,

Bearing in mind the heavy reliance of most of the Caribbean economies on their coastal areas, as well as on the marine environment in general, to achieve their sustainable development needs and goals,

Acknowledging that the intensive use of the Caribbean Sea for maritime transport, as well as the considerable number and interlocking character of the maritime areas under national jurisdiction where Caribbean countries exercise their rights and duties under international law, present a challenge for the effective management of the resources,

Noting the problem of marine pollution caused, inter alia, by land-based sources and the continuing threat of pollution from ship-generated waste and

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[6] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum).

[7] General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[8] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1506, No. 25974.

[9] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

sewage, as well as from the accidental release of hazardous and noxious substances in the Caribbean Sea area,

Mindful of the diversity and dynamic interaction and competition among socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources,

Mindful also of the efforts of the Caribbean countries to address in a more holistic manner the sectoral issues relating to the management of the Caribbean Sea area and, in so doing, to promote an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, through a regional cooperative effort among Caribbean countries,

Welcoming the continued commitment of the member States of the Association of Caribbean States to take the steps necessary to ensure designation of the Caribbean Sea as a special area within the context of sustainable development, as contained in the Declaration of Panama adopted on 29 July 2005 at the Fourth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Association of Caribbean States,

Cognizant of the importance of the Caribbean Sea to present and future generations and to the heritage and the continuing economic well-being and sustenance of people living in the area, and the urgent need for the countries of the region to take appropriate steps for its preservation and protection, with the support of the international community,

1. *Recognizes* the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development, taking into account economic, social and environmental dimensions, as well as the requirements of its users, and in conformity with relevant international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;

2. *Welcomes* the creation by the Association of Caribbean States of the Commission on the Caribbean Sea to undertake the strategic planning and technical follow-up necessary to operationalize the decision to recognize the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development;

3. *Calls* on the international community and the United Nations system to fully support the efforts of the Association of Caribbean States and its Commission to operationalize the decision to recognize the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development;

4. *Recognizes* the efforts of Caribbean countries to create conditions leading to sustainable development aimed at combating poverty and inequality, and in this regard notes with interest the initiatives of the Association of Caribbean States in the focal areas of sustainable tourism, trade, transport and natural disasters;

5. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and the international community to assist, as appropriate, Caribbean countries and their regional organizations in their efforts to ensure the protection of the Caribbean Sea from degradation as a result of pollution from ships, in particular through the illegal release of oil and other harmful substances, and from illegal dumping or accidental release of hazardous waste, including radioactive materials, nuclear waste and dangerous chemicals, in violation of relevant international rules and standards, as well as pollution from land-based activities;

6. *Invites* the Association to submit a report on its progress in the implementation of the present resolution to the Secretary-General for consideration during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly;

7. *Supports* the efforts of Caribbean countries to implement sustainable fisheries management programmes;

8. *Calls upon* States, taking into consideration the Convention on Biological Diversity,[10] to develop national, regional and international programmes for halting the loss of marine biodiversity in the Caribbean Sea, in particular fragile ecosystems, such as coral reefs;

9. *Invites* intergovernmental organizations within the United Nations system to continue their efforts to assist Caribbean countries in becoming parties to the relevant conventions and protocols and in implementing them effectively;

10. *Calls upon* the international community, the United Nations system and the multilateral financial institutions, and invites the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support actively national and regional activities towards the above-mentioned decision;

11. *Urges* the United Nations system and the international community to continue to provide aid and assistance to the countries of the Caribbean region in the implementation of their long-term programmes of disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation, management, relief and recovery, based on their development priorities, through the integration of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction into a comprehensive approach to sustainable development;

12. *Calls upon* Member States to improve as a matter of priority their emergency response capabilities and the containment of environmental damage, particularly in the Caribbean Sea, in the event of natural disasters or of an accident or incident relating to maritime navigation;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-second session, under the sub-item entitled "Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" of the item entitled "Sustainable development", on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the views expressed by relevant regional organizations.

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[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.